

CHINESE MUSIC.

What Dr. Whewell, Master of Trinity, Knew About It.

The remarkable extent of the knowledge possessed by Dr. William Whewell, at one time master of Trinity, Cambridge, is well illustrated by the following story, taken from the "Life and Work of Dr. Momerie."

Two of the younger dons, growing rather jealous of the master's reputation for omniscience, determined that they would discover something of which he knew nothing. They pitched upon the subject of Chinese music. How should he know anything about it? They did not, so they went to an encyclopedia and read the subject up. The next time they met Whewell at a dinner party they led the conversation gradually in the direction of music, when they began to discourse upon the music of the Chinese and gave out all their recently acquired information. Whewell was silent, much to their satisfaction. Evidently he knew nothing about the matter. But just as they were beginning to rejoice in their triumph he said:

"Might I ask, gentlemen, where you got your information?"

"Oh, yes," they replied. "We picked it up out of such and such an encyclopedia."

"Ah," said Whewell. "I was thinking so. I wrote that article thirty years ago, and it's full of mistakes."

THE ELECTRICITY HABIT.

There Is One Thing In Its Favor—It Is Usually Beneficial.

"Of all the habits the one that sticks closest to a fellow is the electricity habit," said a young doctor. "The drink habit and the cocaine habit are mere summer fancies compared with it. But there is one thing to be said in its favor—it is usually beneficial. The electricity habit is contracted just like any other habit. A few currents are administered during an illness. They strengthen and stimulate, and the first thing the patient knows he finds the tonic indispensable. Even after he gets well he craves the treatment. I know one young woman who makes a fair living by calling at the homes of electricity victims and dosing them with a few shocks from a galvanic battery. Most slaves to the habit have their own batteries, but they are afraid to apply the treatment to themselves. That is practically a groundless fear, for there isn't one chance in a thousand of a person giving himself an overdose. Still they prefer an experienced hand to manage the current. Not all the electricity bonds are invalids by any means. Many of them are now as well as they ever were, yet they have become so addicted to the habit that they require the weekly, semi-weekly or possibly daily electric thrills to tone them up."—New York Post.

THE KISS IN THE TUNNEL.

The Way a Man Had Revenge For an Act of Discourtesy.

"Courtesy always pays; discourtesy never does," said a famous Frenchwoman. "Let me tell you a story of an actual happening:

"Two women occupied a compartment in a railway carriage with one man, a stranger. They were extremely rude to this man. In whispers that he could overhear they criticised his costume, his figure and his manner. He, to be revenged, did a singular thing.

"The blackness of a tunnel enveloped the car, and under cover of the darkness the man kissed the back of his hand loudly and repeatedly. Then when the train entered the light again he looked from one woman to the other with a significant smile.

"They exchanged glances of suspicion.

"Was it you he kissed?"

"No; of course not. Was it you?"

"And neither lady would believe the other's denial, and each in her inmost heart believed the other had encouraged the kiss. The man looked cool and complacent. When finally he rose to go he said, lifting his hat with a secular air:

"Have no fear, ladies. I shall never tell which of you it was."

The Sago Plant.

Sago is a nutritive, farinaceous substance obtained from the pith of several species of palms growing in such hot countries as Java and Sumatra. The stem, about fifteen to twenty feet long, is cut into pieces and the pith dug out and placed in a vessel having a sieve bottom. Water poured into the sieve washes the sago thus exposed into a second vessel. When the water is poured off and the residue becomes dry it is known as sago flour. The pith left behind forms what is known as common brown sago.

A Sample of the Sea.

On his return to Cordova from a visit to Mar del Plata, where he had beheld the sea for the first time, Pedro brought with him a bottle containing about an inch of sand from the shore and two inches of salt water to enable his parents, who had never seen the ocean, to form some idea of what it was like. We are informed that his

THE WORD STAPLE.

How It Came to Be Applied to Articles of Commerce.

The word "staple," applied as an adjective to distinguish certain articles of commerce, had its origin in England in the early part of the thirteenth century. The merchants of the staple were the first and most ancient and were so called from their exporting the staple wares of the kingdom—namely, wool, leather, skins, lead and tin. The king's staple was established in certain towns, and certain goods could not be exported without being first brought to those towns and rated and charged with the duty payable to the king. The grower of wool contented himself at first with the sale of it at his own door or at the next town. Thence arose a class of men who bought it from him and became a medium between the grower and the foreign cloth merchants. In 1319 the company had the legal form of a corporation and was the oldest mercantile corporation in England. Edward II. had for the better collecting of duty on wool ordained that the staple for it should be a certain town in the Netherlands, and Antwerp was fixed upon. It was afterward successively removed to St. Omer's, Bruges, Brussels, Louvain, Mecklin and Calais. In 1353 the staple was fixed at Westminster, which caused so great a resort of traders that from a village it was raised to the dignity of a town. In 1378 it was removed to the place still named Staple Inn, in Holborn. Hence "staple goods" are such as have been duly appraised and have paid the regular customs duties.

MILLET'S INFLUENCE.

A Host of Painters Followed Him In Depicting Peasant Life.

In his own words Millet tried to depict "the fundamental side of men and things." His subject was the peasant life—not the representation of it such as one sees in opera or the pretty, sentimental aspect of it, but the actual drama of labor continuously proceeding through the four seasons, the "cry of the soul," echoing in the hearts of the patient, plodding, God fearing toilers. Everything was typical. We have spoken of his "Sower." Of another picture the critic Castagnary wrote: "Do you remember his 'Reaper'?" He might have reaped the whole earth!"

Everything that Millet did was full of a deep seriousness and sincerity. He never was an "easy" painter, so that his greatness as an artist is perhaps more clear in the black and white than in the colored subjects. Certainly in his crayon drawings, lithographs and etchings he proved himself to be one of that limited number of artists who may be reckoned master draftsmen. Moreover, the character that he expresses is of that grand and elemental quality which sometimes reminds us of Michael Angelo.

Millet's influence produced a host of painters of the peasant, among whom the strongest are the Frenchman L'Hermite and Israels, the Dutchman. These, like him, have represented their subject with sympathy and with understanding also.—St. Nicholas.

The British Speaker.

Not only does the speaker of the house of commons enjoy the material benefits of a lordly residence at Westminster palace, a salary of £5,000 a year, £100 a year for stationery and two hogsheds of claret and 2,000 ounces of plate on election, but he enjoys the less substantial advantage of taking precedence of all other commoners. By an act of 1629 it was provided that the lords commissioners of the great seal not being peers "shall have and take place next after the peers of the realm and the speaker of the house of commons."—London Chronicle.

An Eye Test.

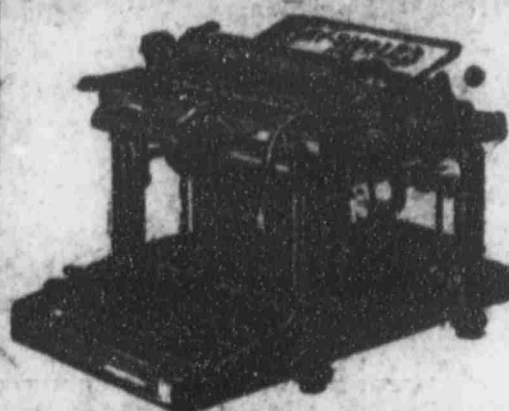
Most people believe that they see the same with both eyes. That this is not the case one can easily convince himself by the following simple experiment: Cover one of the eyes with a hand or a bandage and let the experimenter attempt to snuff out a candle suddenly placed within a few feet of him. He will almost invariably miss the flame, either overreaching, underreaching or putting the fingers too far to the right or left of the flame. With both eyes normal and open the accommodation for distance and direction is instantaneous.

Lowell and Mahaffy.

James Russell Lowell and Professor Mahaffy met for the first time at a friend's house in Birmingham, England, and talked together for four hours. When Lowell drove away in the carriage he exclaimed to his host, "Well, that's one of the most delightful fellows I ever met, and I don't mind if you tell him so!" The friend did so, and Mahaffy received the compliment with equal grace and modesty. "Poor Lowell!" he exclaimed. "To think that he can never have met an Irishman before!"

A Different Growl.

Mrs. Brown-Jane has Mr. Brown come home yet? I thought I heard him just now. Jane—No, ma'am; that was the dog that was growling.



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